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PAN-AMERICAN

Pan-American medical congress. (Second),
Mexico, 1896 I.C.

SECOND PAN-AMERICAN

MEDICAL CONGRESS

MEXICO 1896

title
REPORT OF THE

GENERAL SECRETARY

TRANSLATED BY

W. THOMPSON

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Report of the General Secretary.

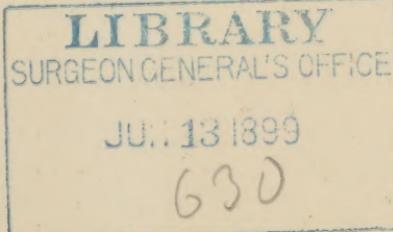
Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Bye-laws of this Congress impose on me the duty of rendering a report of the labors undertaken to realize this Meeting. I propose to be very brief, so as not to tire your attention, and because the details are set forth in the programe which has just been distributed.

The first Congress which was formed by the physicians of the Western Hemisphere, met in the City of Washington in September, 1893, the meeting being due to the powerful initiative of Dr. William Pepper.

I beg leave to interrupt my report for a moment to introduce Dr. Pepper to your knowledge.

At the risk of offending his modesty, I have to inform you that his scientific merits have raised him to the first rank in the Medical Profession of the United States; that the University of Pennsylvania, already famous before 1881, owes to this distinguished physician the great fame that it now enjoys; the increase in the space covered by the University, the new buildings with which it has been endowed, the great number of fresh branches of instruction that it has initiated, and that have given it such prosperity; the creation of important Museums; the good organization of the studies and the admirable conditions on which it has founded the University education; all of which merits have procured him the special honor of a bronze statue in the same Library that he founded. This is Dr. Pepper, whom we have the honor of seeing amongst us to-night.



The other initiator of the First Pan-American Congress was Dr. Charles Reed, whom I also take the liberty of presenting to you, seeing that he is here to-night. His untiring activity took advantage of all resources and led to a favorable resolution in Congress, with the powerful support of the most important orators, and which resolution authorized the President of that Republic to invite all the Nations of the American Continent, to send delegates to that scientific meeting.

In one of those sessions, it was decided to honor our country by holding the second meeting, in the present year in the city of Mexico.

In accordance also with its own bye-laws, the Mexican Medical Congress which met in San Luis Potosi in the year 1804, appointed an Organizing Committee which should make the preparations for the present meeting. This Committee addressed itself to the Supreme Executive of the Republic, asking for the necessary means with which to carry out its mission, and received the most decided support on the part of the President of the Republic; the support that he has always granted whenever it has been a question of protecting and encouraging everything that tends to the progress of our country. I consider it my duty as a matter of justice, to publicly declare in this place, that Gen. Diaz has identified himself with this project, inviting all the Nations of this Hemisphere to send their delegations and to stimulate their national physicians to attend this meeting, and he has in every way contributed with all the resources that are at the disposal of the Executive, for such matters.

All the Ministers have given us their valuable co-operation. The Scientific societies have cordially responded to our invitations; but I must make special mention of the International Committee that resides in the United States, and of which Dr. Pepper is President and Dr. Reed, is the Secretary. Both of these gentlemen honor us with their presence this evening, and they have carried on a most energetic propaganda amongst the physicians of the American Union, and of the Dominion of Canada. In the same manner I must express my gratitude to the government of the Federal District and the City Council of the Capital, who will do us the honor to tender a reception to the members of the Congress; to the Valley Drainage Board which is going to give us an opportunity to inspect its great work, perhaps the most important that ever has been undertaken, for the sanitation of a sole district and one city; to the Governor of the State of Mexico, who will kindly receive in the town of San Juan Teotihuacan, those members of the Congress who may take an interest

in Mexican antiquities, and the arqueological monuments that are found in that picturesque town; to the Jockey Club of Mexico, and to the numerous private individuals, who are giving us their valuable aid in receiving and entertaining in this City, the distinguished guests who honor us with their presence.

The invitations issued by the Government of the Mexican Republic have been responded to by the Dominion of Canada, the United States of America, Guatemala, Nicaragua, San Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica, the Argentine Republic, Venezuela, Ecuador, and Uruguay, as well as by the islands of Cuba, Hayti and the French and Danish West Indies.

Official delegates have been sent by the Dominion of Canada, the Government of the United States, which will be represented by members of the Army and Marine Medical Services, and by the Government of this Republic; the States of Mississippi, Nebraska, Montana, Kentucky, Missouri, New Mexico and South Dakota. From the Mexican Republic, delegates have been sent from the Territory of Lower California, and from the States of Chihuahua, Jalisco, San Luis Potosi, Puebla, Michoacan, Veracruz, Oaxaca, Guanajuato, Hidalgo, Zacatecas and Colima.

The islands of Cuba and Hayti, the Republics of Guatemala, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Ecuador and Peru, have also appointed delegates, as well as the scientific Associations of the District of Columbia, States of New York and Massachusetts, the Faculty of Medicine of Lima, Peru, the National Academy of Medicine in the same city, the Hospital association of the Atchison, Topeka and Sta. Fé R. R., the Supreme Board of Health of Mexico, that of the State of Queretaro, the National Medical Institute, the Academy of Medicine, the Army Medical Corps of the Mexican Republic, the Natural History Society, the Pedro Escobedo Society, the Iatromatic Society, etc.

The Republics of Chile, Brazil and Argentine are represented by means of papers which have been forwarded by physicians of those countries.

Five hundred and fifty physicians of the whole Hemisphere have promised us their attendance and they are accompanied by 96 ladies.

The reading of 294 papers has been announced.

Ninety eight extracts have been received for insertion in the programme.

With this contribution of personal and scientific work the Second Pan-American Medical Congress will open its sessions.

We have every reason to hope that its results will be beneficial to the progress of science, and will tend to alleviate the evils that afflict Humanity. It is in every way a consolation to see the spectacle that is presented by such meetings as this. They make us appreciate the advances of civilization, the benefits of the association and at the same time give us a practical proof of the universal fraternity that is found in scientific studies.

The physicians who come from the Continent, from the islands, from the most northern points, from tropical countries or from the distant Republics of the South, all come animated with the same idea. They will separate from their discussions, all questions or controversies that could touch politics or religion. Their studies and mutual instruction, will not be interfered with in any way by difference of race or of language.

Those who come from distant countries have not taken into consideration the pain of leaving their families, nor have they measured the distance that separates us from their distant lands: they have not been afraid of the dangers to be met with in their long journeys, nor have they counted up the losses incurred through the abandonment of their own business, and still less are they animated by the sordid avarice, that the celebrated English poet Lord Byron, so bitterly censured in those traders, who abandoned their comforts, their families, and their countries, who defied the dangers of the seas and the ardent sun of the Torrid zone in search of wealth, without ever being able to satisfy their unlimited avarice.

No gentlemen; you have not been brought here by the thirst for gold, you do not sacrifice your peaceful and laborious life, nor do you abandon your homes and countries for the sake of ignoble passions. You come here to bring your contribution of knowledge and experience to the progress of medical science; you come to investigate the truth, to study the means of alleviating physical pain and to advance the improvement of human intelligence.

Gentlemen: I can only express the hope that the fulfilment of the duties which you have freely imposed upon yourselves, and the realization of these beautiful ideas, will compensate you for your sacrifices and contribute to the progress of Humanity.

Gentlemen: In the name of my country I thank you for your presence at this Meeting.

GENTLEMEN: YOU ARE WELCOME.

